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The academic careers of three groups of children were followed from grade 1 to grade 12 to determine the effectiveness of early school admission criteria. Children with chronological ages of less than 5 years, 7 months could qualify for early admission into first grade if they achieved a mental age of six years on the Stanford Binet, Form L. Group one consisted of 24 children meeting the criterion for entrance, group two consisted of 24 children not meeting the criterion, while group three consisted of 8 children from group one who obtained a mental age of 7 years or higher. Conclusions were that high I.Q. did not assure school success under regular classroom conditions, early admission produced educational, social and emotional impairment in many children, greater advantages would have accrued if eligible children would not have entered school early, and girls were less adversely affected by early entrance. Experimenters advocate an ungraded school program to allow the child to progress at his own rate emotionally, physically and socially. (SH)

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LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF CHILDREN IN SOMERSET COUNTY WHO WERE PERMITTED TO ENTER SCHOOL EARLY UNDER ACT 312 OF THE 1949 PENNSYLVANIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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The information presented here is not a formal study in the sense of strict control with statistically significant correlations. It is a study in which the school progress of three groups of children are compared in light of school readiness as suggested by test results and the subjective judgment of the examiner.

The ideas for the present study came into being in 1961 when we came across a file of materials dealing with early admission to first grade. The file contained completed test materials for 81 children, responses from parents, letters to the school districts recommending or rejecting early entrance of the child, a State survey on early admissions conducted at that time, and other data necessary to instigate a research study on this subject.*

THE LAW

Act 312 of the 1949 Pennsylvania General Assembly amended Section 1304 of the Pa. School Code on Admission of Beginners to read in part,

"A beginner who is less than 5 yrs. 7 mos. of age but who has attained a mental age of 6 yrs. may be admitted when such admission is recommended by the County Supervisor of Special Education....."

*See Methods Section for materials used.

After much controversy this was amended by Act 184 (approved 6/27/53) which read, in part, 'No child shall be considered for early entrance who has not attained a chronological age of 5 yrs. 0 mos. and a mental age of 7 yrs. 0 mos. before September 1st....."

SUBJECTS

Although 81 children were tested only 48 were used for our study.

Group I — 24 children recommended for entrance

Group II — 24 children not recommended for entrance

Group III — 8 children who obtained a mental age of 7 yrs. 0 mos. on the original Binet L test.

These 8 children are part of the 24 recommended for entrance and were selected because they would have been eligible for early admission under today's law.

Of the 33 that were not used many could not be located.

The remainder who were not used were in the not entered group and the similarity of their materials to others used would have been of little value to our study.

M E T H O D S

In 1951 the Supervisor of Special Education for Somerset County originated the procedures for the early admission of children to first grade under the 1949 Act of the General Assembly. This set up the stage and format for the present study.

At that time he administered to each child a Stanford Binet Intelligence Test Form L, a Goodenough Draw-A-Person Test, and a Vineland Social Maturity Scale. Because of the time factor the Vineland was discontinued after several were given. On the intelligence test if the child obtained a mental age of 6 yrs. 0 mos. before the first day of school and was recommended for placement by the Supervisor of Special Education, he was permitted to enter the first grade during the coming school year.

In some cases where a kindergarten was available and the child's chronological age was such that this would be a better placement, early entrance to kindergarten was recommended.

After the children had been in first grade several months, a letter was sent to each parent to sample their feelings and reactions.

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The foregoing information is the background for the present study.

To organize our thinking on what could be done with the data, we arranged the materials according to those recommended for admission to first grade, those recommended for admission to kindergarten and those not recommended for admission for each school district.

Because most of the early entrants were going to graduate that May we decided to interview each student before graduation with a questionnaire that was prepared to enrich our study (one boy had quit school and was seen in his home and several others had moved out of the county and were contacted by mail).

We also decided to go through the available cumulative folders for all the children to gather whatever background information we felt would be pertinent.

This information was organized into a workable form; however, nothing more could be done until the pupils had graduated. That summer (1963) we completed our data on the early entrants (except the repeaters) and also got comments from the guidance counselors, teachers and high school principals.

As a follow up to the letter sent in 1952 to the parents of early entrants, another was sent in 1963. All of the original questions were retained but more were added to sample feelings at this time.

The following year (summer of 1964) the same procedures were carried out for the pupils not recommended for early entrance, the repeaters and those that had entered kindergarten early.

To make a data picture of our information we put it in chart form listing the areas that we felt would give us the best arrangement for comparative purposes.

Charts were made for the early entrants and the children tested for early admission who were not recommended to enter. A third chart was made for the children in the early entrant group who obtained a mental age of 7 yrs. 0 mos. on the original Binet L test because they would meet the standards that are presently in the Pennsylvania School Code.

Tables were also made of information that we felt was important to our study.

R E S U L T S

Table (I, II, III) Information

* Denotes girl -- 22 in study

** Denotes boy -- 26 in study.

Various achievement tests were given because there was no standardized testing program for the county at that time.

Achievement level indicated is for the total battery.

Group I.Q. scores listed are for both the elementary and secondary levels but are in chronological order.

In some cases achievement scores were not recorded in the cumulative folders for certain years.

For students U, V, and X of Table I & III -- no elementary records were sent to us from these districts out of our county.

Student X was added in Table II because of the low I.Q. score on the original Binet L.

Explanation of grades: recorded remarks are for academic work only.

Excellent	A-B
Good	B-C
Fair	C-D
Poor	D-E

For the early entrants (Group I) only the high school grades were used, where available.

For those not recommended for early entrance (Group II) both the elementary and high school grades are shown, where available.

TABLE I (Group I)

STUDENTS WHO ENTERED UNDER ACT 312

Student	Date of Birth	C.A.	M.A.	Binet L I.Q.	Group I.Q. Scores	Achieve. Gr.	Achieve. Gr. Level	Data from School Records
A*	3/14/46	5-6	6-4	115	134 116 123 131	1st 3rd 5th	1.8 3.9 6.9	Class Rank 1/5th College Boards V M Present Status-Married Grades Good
B*	4/21/46	5-4	6-4	119	117 105 125 127	1st 3rd 5th	2.0 4.6 6.5	Class Rank 1/5th College Boards V 431 M 489 Present Status College Grades Good
C*	3/6/46	5-6	7-4	133	124 130 119 128	1st 3rd 5th	2.4 4.8 6.6	Class Rank 1/5th College Boards V 392 M 596 Present Status-College Grades Excellent
D*	2/17/46	5-6	6-9	123	108 112 104 118	1st 3rd 5th	1.8 4.0	Class Rank Drop out College Boards V M Present Status Married Grades Poor
E**	3/17/46	5-5	7-2	132	118 140 129 125	1st 3rd 5th	2.2 4.7	Class Rank 4/5th College Boards V M Present Status College Grades Fair to poor Other Repeated ½ yr. in 9th grade
F**	4/26/46	5-5	6-0	111	113 125 120	1st 3rd 5th	3.0 4.8 7.6	Class Rank 3/5th College Boards V M Present Status Service Grades Fair
G*	4/6/46	5-5	6-6	120	124 120 132	1st 3rd 5th	2.4 3.4 7.1	Class Rank 2/5th College Board V M Present Status Beautician Grades good School
H*	2/2/46	5-7	6-6	116	129 126 112	1st 3rd 5th	1.9 4.6 6.5	Class Rank 1/5th College Boards Present Status College Grades Good
I**	3/19/46	5-6	6-2	112	119 103 89	1st 3rd 5th	1.8 3.0 5.0	Class Rank Drop out College Boards V M Present Status Unemployed Grades Poor repeated 3rd & 5th

TABLE I (continued)

Student	Date of Birth	C.A.	M.A.	Binet L I.Q.	Group I.Q. Scores	Achieve. Gr.	Gr. Level	Data from School Records
J*	2/13/46	5-6	6-4	115	101 98 102 120	1st 3rd 5th	1.9 4.0 6.0	Class Rank 3/5th College Boards V M Present Status Married Grades Average
K*	2/5/46	5-7	6-2	110	116 128	1st 3rd 5th	1.5 3.2 6.1	Class Rank 1/5th College Boards V M Present Status Nursing School Grades Good
L*	5/12/46	5-3	6-4	121	130 114	1st 3rd 5th	2.1 4.1 6.3	Class Rank 1/5th College Boards V 431 M 431 Present Status College Grades Good
M*	3/13/46	5-6	6-10	124	108 120	1st 3rd 5th	2.0 3.6 6.3	Class Rank 1/5th College Boards V 426 M 405 Present Status Nursing School Grades Fair to good
N**	2/27/47	5-2	6-10	132	123 119 102 131	1st 3rd 5th	1.9 4.7 7.0	Class Rank 1/5th College Boards V 618 M 606 Present Status College Grades Fair to good Other Repeated some subjects
JA	2/16/47	5-6	7-2	130	119 109 112	1st 3rd 5th	2.0 3.9 5.8	Class Rank 2/5th College Boards V 348 M 370 Present Status Beautician School Grades Fair
P*	4/8/47	4-5	5-1	115	109 117 114	1st 3rd 5th	1.7 3.8 5.7	Class Rank 2/5th College Boards V M Present Status Technical school Grades Fair Other Entered kindergarten early
Q**	5/29/47	4-3	5-4	125	105 124 122	1st 3rd 5th	2.4 4.7 5.9	Class Rank 3/5th College Boards V M Present Status Service Grades Fair to poor Other Entered kindergarten early, repeated 2nd gr.

TABLE I (continued)

Student	Date of Birth	C.A.	M.A.	Binet L I.Q.	Group I.Q. Scores	Achieve. Gr.	Gr. Level	Data from School Records
R**	7/9/47	4-2	5-3	126	124 116	1st 3rd 5th	2.3 4.1 6.1	Class Rank 2/5th College Boards V 382 M 431 Present Status College Grades Fair Other Entered kdg.early
S*	5/29/47	5-3	6-10	130	106 111 117 122	1st 3rd 5th	2.3 4.2 6.3	Class Rank 1/5th College Boards V 611 M 397 Present Status College Grades Good
T**	4/8/46	5-5	7-4	135	98 101 109 108	1st 3rd 5th	1.9 3.6 5.1	Class Rank Drop out College Boards V M Present Status Not Known Grades Poor Other Repeated 1st
U*	4/12/46	5-5	No Elem records 7-8	142	112 104	1st 3rd 5th		Class Rank Drop out College Board V M Present Status Not Known Grades Poor
V**	6/24/46	5-3	No Elem Records 7-4	140	124 114	1st 3rd 5th		Class Rank 1/5th College Boards V 445 M 541 Present Status College Grades Good
W*	2/7/47	5-6	8-0	145	134 141 138	1st 3rd 5th	2.3 6.4 10.4	Class Rank 1/5th College Boards V 676 M 730 Present Status College Grades Excellent
Y**	4/3/46	5-5	No Elem Records 7-0	129 .	. 117 141	1st 3rd 5th		Class Rank 3/5th College Boards V 563 M 480 Present Status College Grades Fair

TABLE II (Group II)

PUPILS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR ENTRANCE UNDER ACT 312

Student	Date of Birth	C.A.	M.A.	Binet L I.Q.	Group I.Q. Scores	Achieve. Gr.	Achieve. Gr. Level	Data from School Records
A**	6/8/46	5-5	5-10	108	89 103 92	1st 3rd 5th	1.8 2.5 4.2	Class Rank 5/5th College Boards V M Present Status Service Grades good elem, poor H.S.
B**	3/25/46	5-5	5-8	105	107 109 102	1st 3rd 5th	2.0 4.7 6.7	Class Rank 4/5th College Boards V 357 M 392 Present Status Technical School Grades good elem, ave. H.S.
C**	4/15/47	5-4	5-10	109	113 121 95	1st 3rd 5th	2.6 4.5 6.1	Class Rank 3/5th College Boards V 449 M 527 Present Status college Grades excel. elem, good H.S.
D*	5/1/46	5-4	5-10	109	110 129 119 131	1st 3rd 5th	3.0 4.8 6.9	Class Rank 1/5th College Boards V 547 M 505 Present Status Nurses Training Grades excel., elem & H.S.
E*	3/7/46	5-6	5-11	108	124 119 115 108 111	1st 3rd 5th	2.6 4.6 6.1	Class Rank 2/5th College Boards V M Present Status working Grades excel. elem. average H.S.
F**	9/13/46	5-0	5-3	105	94 108 103 97	1st 3rd 5th	2.4 3.8 6.0	Class Rank 4/5th College Boards V M Present Status working Grades fair to poor elem. & H.S.
G**	3/11/46	5-6	5-8	103	118 125 117 128	1st 3rd 5th	3.0 4.8 7.6	Class Rank 2/5th College Boards V 490 M 482 Present Status College Grades Excel. elem, good H.S.
H**	2/14/47	5-6	5-6	100	108 113 104	1st 3rd 5th	2.7 4.9 6.6	Class Rank 2/5th College Boards V M Present Status Jr. College Grades Excel elem-good H.S. Other Took A.C.T. exam for Maryland & W.Va.
I*	5/17/46	5-4	5-10	109	105 112 110 114	1st 3rd 5th	3.0 5.1 6.5	Class Rank 1/5th College Boards V M Present Status Married Grades Excel. elem-good H.S.

TABLE II (continued)

Student	Date of Birth	C.A.	M.A.	Binet L I.Q.	Group I.Q. Scores	Achieve. Gr	Gr. Level	Data from School Records
		No elementary scores				6th	7.0	Class Rank 3/5th
					123	7th	9.8	College Board V 462 M 562
J**	2/19/47	5-1	5-6	108	114	8th	10.8	Present Status
					125			Grades Excel elem--fair H.S.
								Other Transcript to college
					101	1st	1.8	Class Rank 4/5th
					99	3rd	3.1	College Boards V M
K**	10/26/46	4-10	5-1	105	117	5th	6.3	Present Status
					102			Grades Good elem.-ave. H.S.
					102	1st	2.2	Class Rank 3/5th
					98	3rd	4.1	College Boards V 442 M 456
L**	2/14/47	5-6	5-8	103	99	5th	6.2	Present Status College
								Grades Excel elem-good H.S.
					119	1st	1.7	Class Rank 1/5th
					129	3rd	4.8	College Board V 466 M 526
M**	3/5/47	5-5	5-9	106	111	5th	6.7	Present Status Jr. College
					126			Grades Excel elem & H.S.
					98	1st	2.2	Class Rank 2/5th
					100	3rd	4.1	College Boards V M
N*	2/25/47	5-6	6-1	111	107	5th	5.5	Present Status Beauticians School
					95			Grades Good elem.fair H.S.
					99	1st	2.0	Class Rank 4/5th
					95	3rd	4.4	College Boards V 359 M 303
O*	2/25/47	5-5	5-8	105	104	5th	5.9	Present Status
					109			Grades Good elem-fair to below H.S.
								Other Transcript to College
					111	1st	2.8	Class Rank 1/5th
					108	3rd	4.9	College Boards V 410 M 430
P**	2/8/47	5-6	5-6	100	113	5th	6.7	Present Status College
								Grades Excel. elem-good H.S.
					108	1st	2.7	Class Rank 3/5th
					122	3rd	4.7	College Boards V 435 M 343
Q**	4/27/46	5-4	5-10	109	116	5th	6.2	Present Status - College, dropped out
								Grades Good elem-fair to poor H.S., Married Sr.yr.
					98	1st	2.0	Class Rank 5/5th
					94	3rd	4.1	College Boards V M
R**	7/20/46	5-1	6-0	118	97	5th	5.7	Present Status Service
								Grades Good elem.-fair to poor H.S.
								Other Repeated 1st Immature
					117	1st	2.2	Class Rank 2/5th
					102	3rd	4.9	College Boards V 546 M 562
S**	5/20/47	5-3	6-8	127	107	5th	5.6	Present Status College
								Grades Excel elem - good H.S. (not recommended for entrance - immature)

TABLE II (continued)

Student	Date of Birth	C.A.	M.A.	Binet I.Q.	Group I.Q. Scores	Achieve. Gr.	Achieve. Gr. Level	Data from School Records
T**	2/8/47	5-6	6-2	112	114 116 132	1st 3rd 5th	3.0 4.8 6.8	Class Rank 1/5th College Boards V 625 M 659 Present Status College Grades Excel elem-good H.S. (permitted to enter but parents kept home)
U**	4/26/47	5-4	5-10	109	122 127 115	1st 3rd 5th	1.7 4.4 5.6	Class Rank 3/5th College Boards V 260 M 571 Present Status Technical School Grades Good elem -- fair to good H.S.
V*	5/10/46	5-4	5-10	109	80 105 118 124	1st 3rd 5th	2.1 4.8 7.5	Class Rank [illegible]5th College Board V 566 M 532 Present Status College Grades Excel Elem - good H.S.
W*	2/12/47	5-6	5-4	97	109 102 98	1st 3rd 5th	2.7 4.4 6.3	Class Rank 3/5th College Boards V M Present Status Nursing Grades Fair elem & H.S.
X**	2/21/46	5-7	4-11	88	112 98 92	1st 3rd 5th	2.8 3.7 5.5	Class Rank 4/5th College Boards V M Present Status Army Grades Fair Elem & H.S.

TABLE III (Group III)

STUDENTS WHO COULD HAVE ENTERED UNDER EXISTING LAW - MA 7-0

Student	Date of Birth	C.A.	M.A.	Binet L I.Q.	Group I.Q. Scores	Achieve. Gr.	Gr. Level	Data from School Record
C*	3/6/46	5-6	7-4	133	124 130 119 128	1st 3rd 5th	2.4 4.8 6.6	Class Rank 1/5th College Board V 392 M 596 Present Status College Grades Excellent
E**	3/17/46	5-5	7-2	132	118 140 129 125	1st 3rd 5th	2.2 4.7	Class Rank 4/5th College Boards V M Present Status College Grades Fair to poor Other Repeated 1/2 yr. in 9th
O*	2/16/47	5-6	7-2	130	119 109 112	1st 3rd 5th	2.0 3.9 5.8	Class Rank 3/5th College Boards V 348 M 370 Present Status Beautician School Grades Fair
T**	4/8/46	5-5	7-4	135	98 101 109 108	1st 3rd 5th	1.9 3.6 5.1	Class Rank Drop out College Boards V Present Status Not Known Grades Poor Other Repeated 1st
U*	4/12/46	5-5	7-8	142	112 104	1st 3rd 5th		Class Rank Drop out College Boards V M Present Status Not Known Grades Poor Other No elem. records
V**	6/23/46	5-3	7-4	140	124 114	1st 3rd 5th		Class Rank 1/5th College Boards V 445 M 541 Present Status College Grades Good Other No Elem. records
W*	2/7/47	5-6	8-0	145	134 141 138	1st 3rd 5th	2.3 6.4 10.4	Class Rank 1/5th College Board V 676 M 730 Present Status College Grades Excellent
X**	4/3/46	5-5	7-0	129	117 141	1st 3rd 5th		Class Rank 3/5th College Board V 563 M 480 Present Status College Grades Fair Other No Elem. Records

TABLE IV

AVERAGE I.Q. AND ELEMENTARY ACHIEVEMENT INFORMATION FOR THE TOTAL GROUP

	Total Group		
	Entered	Not Entered	MA 7-0
Average Binet L I.Q. (Entrance Test)	123	107	135
Average Achievement (Total test achievement)			
1st Grade (year end)	2.1	2.4	2.2
3rd Grade (mid year)	4.2	4.3	4.7
5th Grade (mid year)	6.5	6.2	7.0

Averages were used in this table for convenience and not to prove a statistical point.

It is realized that the early entrants are younger chronologically and are achieving well when compared with the non entrants, however, these children were placed according to mental age and had to function in a first grade environment so comparisons must be made according to school achievement.

With an average I.Q. of 123 for the total entered group the approximated achievement level at the end of first grade would be 2.5 grade level, so they are achieving as a group 4 months below expectation. The part of the early entrants that had M.A.'s of 7-0 or better with a resultant average I.Q. of 135 should have achieved at approximately 3.1 grade level, so they were almost a year behind expectancy.

The early entrants tend to catch up in achievement at about a 3rd grade level and usually continue to widen the gap as they go through school.

TABLE V

GRADUATION INFORMATION TAKEN FROM CUMULATIVE RECORDS FOR THE TOTAL GROUP

	Total Group		
	Entered	Not Entered	MA 7-0
Number of girls	15	7	4
Number of boys	9	17	4
Total	24	24	8
Graduated in upper 1/5 of class	11	6	2
Dropped out of school (2 boys - 2 girls)	4	0	2
Took college boards	10	14	5
Went to college	10	10	5
Took additional training beyond high school	6	5	1

The above table is self explanatory and little clarification is needed however, a few remarks may be in order.

Almost twice as many girls entered as boys again pointing up the maturity factor and how it possibly relates to test performance at that age.

There were four drop outs in the entered group (2 of these being in the MA 7-0 segment) and none in the not entered.

More people in the not entered group took the college boards.

The number of pupils going to college was almost equal for each group.

Several of the not entered group have applied for college and do not know their status as of this date.

TABLE VI

COMPARISON OF BOYS IN THE TOTAL GROUP IN SEVERAL AREAS

EARLY ENTRANTS (Group I)

Student	I.Q.	Class Rank at Graduation	Grades	Went to College
E	132	4/5	Fair to poor h.s.	x
F	111	3/5	Fair h.s.	
I	112	Drop out	Poor h.s.	
N	132	1/5	Fair to good h.s.	x
Q	125	3/5	Fair to poor h.s.	
R	126	2/5	Fair h.s.	x
T	135	Drop out	Poor h.s.	
V	140	1/5	Good h.s.	x
X	129	3/5	Fair h.s.	x

NOT RECOMMENDED FOR EARLY ADMISSION (Group II)

A	108	5/5	Good elem., poor h.s.	
B	105	4/5	Good elem., ave. h.s.	
C	109	3/5	Excell.elem.,good h.s.	x
F	105	4/5	Fair elem., poor h.s.	
G	103	2/5	Excell. elem.,good h.s.	x
H	100	2/5	Excell. elem., good h.s.	x
J	108	3/5	Excell. elem., fair h.s.	
K	105	4/5	Good elem., ave. h.s.	
L	103	3/5	Excell. elem., good h.s.	x
M	106	1/5	Excell. elem., good h.s.	x
P	100	1/5	Excell. elem., good h.s.	x
Q	109	3/5	Good elem., poor h.s.	x
R	118	5/5	Good elem., poor h.s.	
S	127	2/5	Excell. elem.,good h.s.	x
T	112	1/5	Excell. elem.,good h.s.	x
U	109	3/5	Good elem., fair h.s.	
X	88	4/5	Fair elem & h.s.	

TABLE VII

COMPARISON OF GIRLS IN THE TOTAL GROUP IN SEVERAL AREAS

EARLY ENTRANTS (Group I)

Student	I.Q.	Class Rank at Graduation	Grades	Went to College
A	115	1/5	Good high school	
B	119	1/5	Good high school	x
C	133	1/5	Excellent high school	x
D	123	Drop out		
G	120	2/5	Good high school	
H	116	1/5	Good high school	x
J	115	3/5	Average high school	
K	110	1/5	Good high school	
L	121	1/5	Good high school	x
M	124	1/5	Fair to good high school	
O	130	2/5	Fair high school	
P	115	2/5	Fair high school	
S	130	1/5	Good high school	x
U	142	Drop out	Poor high school	
W	145	1/5	Excellent high school	x
			NOT RECOMMENDED FOR EARLY ADMISSION (Group II)	
D	109	1/5	Excell. elem. & h.s.	
E	108	2/5	Excell. elem., Ave. h.s.	
I	109	1/5	Excell. elem.,good h.s.	
N	111	2/5	Good elem., fair h.s.	
O	105	4/5	Good elem., fair h.s.	
V	109	2/5	Excell. elem., good h.s.	x
W	97	3/5	Fair elem., & h.s.	

TABLE VIII

RESPONSES OF GROUP WHO ENTERED EARLY TO PERTINENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

	Yes	No	Undecided
Are you satisfied with your school progress	5	6	2
Do you feel it hurt you socially	2	9	2
Would you want to enter early again	4	5	4
Do you feel it held down your academic achievement	7	5	1
Do you feel it hurt your future education plans	1	11	1
Was there extra pressure put on you to achieve	7	5	1

Interview responses tended to show little awareness of the reactions from entering early because the child had lived with the problems without possibly realizing the underlying causes. This seems to cause some inconsistencies to appear.

The responses to the question, "Was there extra pressure put on you to achieve" -- the positive responses were definite and the negative and undecided responses were said with "tongue-in-cheek", in most cases.

In the question "Would you want to enter early again" the major factor seemed to be the prestige involved. This feeling even permeated the negative and undecided responses.

The question, "Do you feel it hurt you socially" the negative responses were from the girls. Boys related such things as "too small for athletics, too young for dances", etc.

TABLE IX

RESPONSES FROM PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE SENT IN 1964 FOR THE EARLY ENTRANTS

	Yes	No	Undecided
Do you regret entering your child early	6	9	0
Do you favor early entrance	6	8	1
Would you do it over again	6	6	4

There was a feeling that the reactions from parents in some instances were not accurate. That in many cases an underlying feeling of guilt is still present over putting excessive pressure on the young child to do well in school and also looking at the child's total school experience.

On several questionnaires false statements as to what the child is doing since graduation were made. This was corroborated by people who knew the family.

In the group of the six favorable responses to all the questions, were the ones that false statements had been made.

Many parents did not return the questionnaires even though they were living in the county. Some answered only part of the questions.

TABLE X

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES OF THE GROUP SCORING MA 7-0

	Yes	No	Undecided
Do you regret entering your child early	4	4	0
Do you favor early entrance	2	6	0
Would you do it over again	2	5	1

The reactions from this group appeared to be the most direct and honest. The parents seemed to realize the child's potential and that the child never achieved as he should or worked extra hard to keep up.

Both positive and negative responses were to the point with little hedging.

Only one questionnaire was favorable and definite in all areas.

D I S C U S S I O N

We would like to preface our remarks in this discussion by saying, children who are selected to enter school early should be something special not only at the time of admission but throughout their lives. They should be the school and community leaders.

It was found after several years and much disappointment that the original requirement for early admission -- a mental age of 6 yrs. 0 mos. before the first day of school was not realistic. The 1953 General Assembly amended Section 1304 and required a mental age of 7 yrs. 0 mos. before the first day of September. This is how the law stands at the present time.

As any psychologist or educator knows, a mental age of 6 yrs, 7 yrs. or 8 yrs. is no guarantee of school success, that too many factors are involved that can affect the learning progress of a child. These are usually intangibles that cannot be measured by any battery of tests and in many cases are the factors that preclude success in early and later years. Many of these are psychological and do not manifest themselves until the child has been placed in a competitive environment where undue pressure (internal or external) is put on him to achieve.

Our findings seem to coincide with an article written by Jack Harrison Pollack in the February 1965 issue of the NEA Journal* which states, in part, "Overplacement is perhaps the greatest single cause for children's hating school, failing, dropping out.....approximately half of the pupils doing poorly in school have been placed at a grade level above where they should be."

*Excerpts from "School Readiness" by Ilg and Ames of the Gesell Institute of Child Development.

Most of the children who were permitted to enter early were from homes where one or both parents were college graduates and were business or professional people. This type of a culturally stimulating environment seems to give the child a better background which intelligence tests attempt to measure and as a result they generally score higher. This inflated ability level has a tendency to make many of them appear better than they will actually function in later years. It also, in many cases, gives the parents and teachers a false image of the child's functioning level. When the child does not maintain the level they feel he is capable of (according to the I.Q. score) they exert undue pressure to 'make him keep up".

Again I would like to quote from Pollack's article in the NEA Journal*, "Misled by early high I.Q. scores, such parents strive to make educational prodigies of their offsprings, often swapping a child's future happiness for the dubious honor of having him in the advanced grade."

The 24 children who were not permitted to enter early appear to have gotten a good educational foundation in the early grades because of the additional year of maturity. This strong foundation appears to be the impetus for learning momentum that carries them comfortably through the elementary grades.

Often if the child is above average in ability and a motivated learner, he can be guided into a highly successful career in his chosen field.

*IBID

However, as may be expected, if the educational and psychological forces have not taken their toll, the early entrants usually surpass the non-entrants in achievement in the secondary school and usually go on to more training after graduation.

It must also be pointed out that there are more over achievers in the not entered group and that good grades, good school relationships and good achievement often give them and their parents a spurious picture of the child's potential and that many disappointments arise when College Board Examinations are taken and when college achievement is difficult.

In our study only one child, of the 24 who were permitted to enter early, progressed and achieved comfortably throughout her school life. She is in college now with aspirations for advanced degrees. She was a large, mature girl with an MA of 8 yrs. 0 mos. (I.Q. 145) at the time of entrance. She was the daughter of professional parents where all the cultural advantages and motivations were present.

Conversely two children MA of 7 yrs. 8 mos. (I.Q. 142) and MA 7 yrs. 4 mos. (I.Q. 135) were dropouts.

The final assessment of the affects of early entrance on the children in our study is a long way off.

The future success, mediocrity or failure of these adults will manifest itself regardless of when they entered school for we cannot predict or measure the intricacies of life.

C O N C L U S I O N S

1. From the data in our study it would appear that high ability as recorded on an I.Q. test, at an early age, or the recommendations of a qualified psychologist, as he interprets his battery of materials, does not guarantee school success under regular classroom conditions.
2. Where a child must assimilate a certain amount of knowledge and attain a certain academic level at the end of each year, before he is moved on to the next grade level, problems will arise.
3. Early admission may be of value in a heterogeneous school structure if the program is geared to the total needs of the young child.
4. Some form of an ungraded school program appears necessary to allow the child to progress at his own rate until he has gained the physical, social and emotional maturity necessary to handle accelerated work in a regular classroom structure
5. Early admission is harmful to many children educationally, emotionally and socially.
6. It appears that no advantages are gained by entering school early (except personal prestige) that waiting a year would not provide better. However, disadvantages appear that may not have shown up if more maturity was present.
7. It appears that girls are less adversely affected by early entrance than boys -- all things being equal.